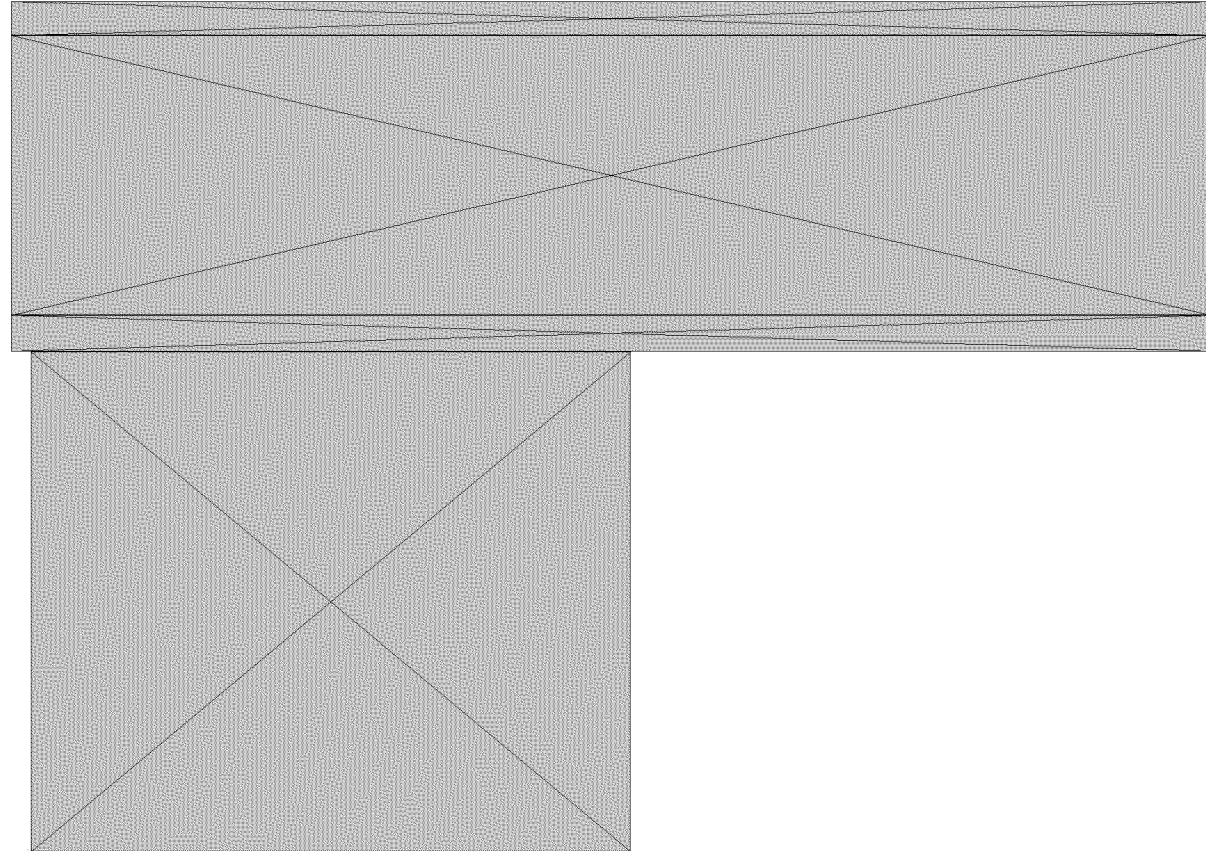


To: Grantham, Nancy[Grantham.Nancy@epa.gov]
From: EnergyGuardian
Sent: Tue 8/11/2015 11:20:36 AM
Subject: EPA holding first hearing on regulating airplane carbon

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Energy and environment headlines for the morning of Tuesday, August 11, 2015



EPA holding first hearing on regulating airplane carbon

By Kevin Rogers

Fresh off of finalizing its plan to slash power plant carbon emissions, the Environmental Protection Agency is holding its first public hearing Tuesday on its new effort to regulate aircraft emissions.

The hearing at EPA's headquarters will give stakeholders their first chance to address the issue since the agency proposed an endangerment finding in June designating airplane carbon

emissions as a threat to human health.

In announcing the proposed rulemaking, EPA estimated that aircraft account for 3 percent of total U.S. greenhouse gas emissions, 11 percent of total U.S. transportation emissions and 29 percent of global aircraft emissions.

Should the agency move ahead with rulemaking, the current proposal would not affect military vehicles, smaller recreational airplanes or helicopters.

When first announced, the proposal drew swift fire from Republicans, who said it was another regulatory burden that would hike costs for an industry already making gains on fuel efficiency.

"This administration is creating unnecessary red tape across every industry to progress an economically disastrous climate agenda," Senate Environment and Public Works Committee Chairman James Inhofe, R-Okla., said at the time.

"American air carriers have already made great strides in fuel efficiency and many have committed to a 1.5 percent annual fuel efficiency improvement through 2020. Adding the EPA into the equation will only increase costs without any substantial benefit."

EPA says it won't publish the final rule until after ongoing international negotiations over carbon reductions are wrapped up with the industry in early 2016. Those talks have been led by the UN's International Civil Aviation Organization, which helps set international aviation policy.

The industry argues it is doing everything technologically possible to reduce fuel consumption and carbon emissions, particularly because fuel is the industry's No. 1 cost.

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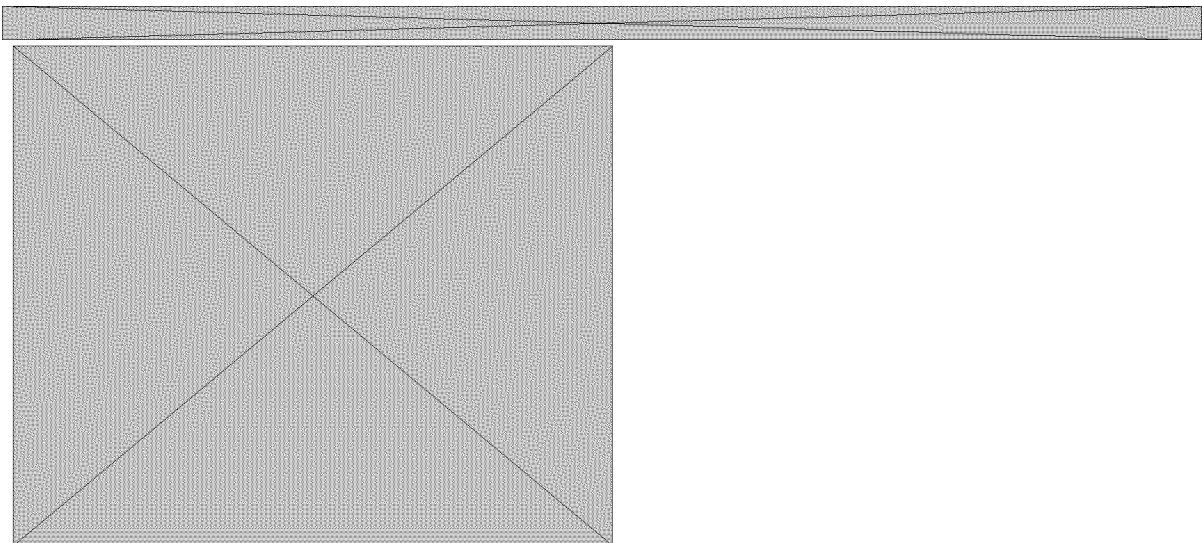
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Lawmakers press McCarthy for answers, action on mine spill

By Kevin Rogers

Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Gina McCarthy is taking heat from lawmakers for her agency's poor communication following an accidental spill of more than three million gallons of mining waste that has sullied the Animas River.

The spill, triggered by EPA equipment at the Gold King Mine on August 5, discharged heavy metals including lead and arsenic into the river. Certain stretches of the Animas and San Juan rivers in Colorado and New Mexico have been declared disaster areas in the wake of the spill.

In separate letters to McCarthy, House Science, Space and Technology Committee Chairman Lamar Smith, R-Texas, and New Mexico Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich, both Democrats, lambasted the agency's response to the incident and called for swift corrective action.

An EPA spokeswoman said the agency had received the letters and was reviewing them.

"It has been five days since the spill and the EPA has failed to answer important questions, including whether the polluted water poses health risks to humans or animals," Smith wrote. "It is concerning that the agency charged with ensuring that the nation's waters are clean is reportedly responsible for the toxic water spill at Gold King Mine."

Smith, a frequent critic of the agency's regulatory agenda, called on McCarthy to schedule a briefing with his committee by Aug. 17 to offer details on EPA's water analysis of affected bodies of water; details on the chemicals present in the mine; documents on the lead up to the spill; and any potential risks that such chemicals pose to humans or wildlife.

The New Mexico senators, joined by Rep. Ben Ray Lujan, D-N.M., called the agency's communication in the aftermath of the spill "troubling" and urged McCarthy to appoint a single leader to handle EPA's response going forward.

"Our offices, as well as leaders in the State and our constituents, had to learn of the spill and critical details from news reports before receiving any information from EPA," the lawmakers wrote. "In an effort to improve communication and coordination, we believe that EPA should establish a single point person to oversee the agency's efforts."

The lawmakers also pressed McCarthy on developing a toll-free number for residents in New Mexico to receive updates, provide information on any ongoing mine inspections and to develop a water supply plan for areas the leak affected.

"Since learning of the spill, our offices have been in constant communications with EPA, however, we have yet to be presented with a comprehensive plan from the agency to provide water to those whose wells have been affected, farmers whose crops are not being irrigated, ranchers whose livestock are without water, and people for drinking, cooking, and showering," they said. "EPA must provide impacted States with all of the resources that it has at its disposal."

Officials downstream from Colorado mine spill demand answers

By Susan Montoya Bryan and Ellen Knickmeyer

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP) — Local officials in towns downstream from where millions of gallons of mine waste spilled into a southwest Colorado river are demanding answers about possible long-term threats to the water supply.

Colorado and New Mexico declared stretches of the Animas and San Juan rivers to be disaster areas as the orange-colored waste stream made its way downstream toward Lake Powell in Utah after the spill Wednesday at the abandoned Gold King mine near Silverton, Colorado.

The 3 million gallons of mine waste included high concentrations of arsenic, lead and other heavy metals. Workers with the EPA accidentally unleashed the spill as they inspected the abandoned mine site.

EPA officials said Monday that there was no leading edge of contamination visible in downstream sections of the San Juan River or Lake Powell. But that has done little to ease concerns or quell the anger caused by the spill.

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Shell seeks modified permit to drill deeper in Arctic offshore drilling

By Dan Joling

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP) — With a key safety vessel repaired and in northern waters, Royal Dutch Shell PLC has applied to amend its federal exploratory drilling permit to allow drilling into oil-bearing rock in the Arctic Ocean off Alaska's northwest coast.

Shell last month received permission to begin some drilling at two sites in the Chukchi Sea but was banned from digging into petroleum zones roughly 8,000 feet below the ocean floor.

The federal Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement limited the permit then because equipment was not on hand to handle a possible well blowout.

The equipment is on the Fennica, a leased Finnish icebreaker that suffered hull damage July 3 as it left Dutch Harbor, a port in the Aleutians Islands.

Michigan lawmakers seek study, hope to block Canadian nuclear waste plan

By John Flesher

TRAVERSE CITY, Mich. (AP) — Members of Congress from Michigan announced a new effort Monday to prevent the burial of Canadian nuclear waste near the Lake Huron shore, calling for a study by an agency that represents both nations in boundary waters disputes.

Democratic Sens. Debbie Stabenow and Gary Peters said they will introduce legislation that would require the U.S. State Department to negotiate with Canada over delaying a decision on the waste facility until the study is completed. Rep. Dan Kildee, a Democrat from Flint Township, said he would offer the same measure in the House.

The proposal by publicly owned Ontario Power Generation for permanently storing 7.1 million cubic feet of radioactive waste "is an unnecessary threat to both the U.S. and Canada's shared water resources," Kildee said.

The legislation would invoke a 1909 treaty allowing either nation to require a review by the International Joint Commission when differences arise over their shared waterways. The treaty established the commission to provide advice on matters such as water pollution, water levels and air quality in boundary regions.

Japan restarts reactor after break due to Fukushima

By Mari Yamaguchi and Elaine Kurtenbach

TOKYO (AP) — A power plant operator in southern Japan restarted a nuclear reactor on Tuesday, the first to begin operating under new safety requirements following the Fukushima disaster.

Kyushu Electric Power Co. said Tuesday it had restarted the No. 1 reactor at its Sendai nuclear plant as planned. The restart marks Japan's return to nuclear energy four-and-half-years after the 2011 meltdowns at the Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear power plant in northeastern Japan following an earthquake and tsunami.

The national broadcaster NHK showed plant workers in the control room as they turned the reactor back on. Tomomitsu Sakata, a spokesman for Kyushu Electric Power, said the reactor was put back online without any problems.

The Fukushima disaster displaced more than 100,000 people due to radioactive contamination and spurred a national debate over this resource-scarce country's reliance on nuclear power.

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A message from the American Petroleum Institute

America is now the world's #1 natural gas producer and will soon be #1 in oil. Now more than ever, abundant energy means abundant prosperity, opportunity and security for all Americans.

[Learn more at EnergyTomorrow.org](http://EnergyTomorrow.org)

Fukushima update: Challenges remain at destroyed nuke plant

By The Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — As Japan resumed generating nuclear power Tuesday, restarting 1 reactor in the south, the destroyed Fukushima Dai-ichi plant in the northeast remains a highly radioactive site, more than four years after an earthquake and tsunami triggered meltdowns in three of its six reactors.

A look at the status of the plant:

RADIATION LEAKS

Water is still being pumped into the reactors to prevent further meltdowns, and huge amounts of it, now radioactive, have leaked out of the damaged containment chambers and into other parts of the buildings. Some has leaked outside, so a sea wall and an underground barrier have been built to try to block the contaminated water from reaching the sea. Any leakage now appears to be minimal, but the immediate coastal waters are largely closed to commercial fishing.

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Australia criticized over greenhouse-gas reduction target

By Rod McGuirk

CANBERRA, Australia (AP) — Australia has been criticized over its new greenhouse-gas reduction target which lags behind the ambitions of most wealthy countries.

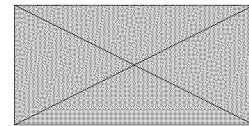
Lawmakers in Prime Minister Tony Abbott's conservative government on Tuesday agreed on a target of curbing carbon gas emissions to at least 26 percent below 2005 levels by 2030. The target could go as high as 28 percent, Abbott said.

"This is fairly and squarely in the middle of comparable economies," Abbott told reporters.

The target scales back a draft proposal to reduce Australian greenhouse gas emissions by 30 percent in that period.

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Week in Review - Clean Power Plan rolls out amid charges of collusion

Meanwhile, power plant emissions hit 27-year low.

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EPA planning cost-benefit analysis on mercury regulation after court ruling

The Environmental Protection Agency has promised to conduct a cost-benefit analysis on the Mercury and Air Toxics Standards rule partly rejected by the U.S. Supreme Court, telling a lower court the findings will be submitted by next spring, The Hill reports.

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Grid operator warns carbon rule could strain system

The operator of the PJM Interconnection transmission system is warning that more rapid retirement of older power plants prompted by the Environmental Protection Agency's Clean Power Plan could put a strain on its grid, Platts reports.

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OPEC sees U.S. crude production increasing

Offshore project start-ups will boost U.S. crude production through the end of the year, according to OPEC's latest monthly forecast, which increased its projection for demand growth slightly, Reuters reports.

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Oil slips on Chinese devaluation

China's move to devalue the yuan snuffed out Monday's oil market rally, Reuters reports. U.S. benchmark crude lost 25 cents to \$44.71 a barrel in electronic trading on the Nymex early Tuesday, while Brent fell 10 cents to \$50.31.

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Low oil prices hit Chevron harder

Chevron had been outperforming rivals Exxon Mobil and Shell over the past five years, but the company's performance has taken a beating since oil prices started sliding over a year ago, Dow Jones reports.

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Drop in 2016 oil price projection from Raymond James

Citing an "ugly" oil market, analysts at financial services firm Raymond James have dropped their 2016 projections for oil prices by \$10, to \$55 a barrel, FuelFix reports.

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ERCOT reports first-ever demand over 69,000MW

As the temperatures continued to soar in Texas, the Electric Reliability Council of Texas reported a record-setting peak demand of 69,408 megawatts Monday afternoon, according to KVUE.

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Hard times for SunEdison

The decline in SunEdison's stock price over the past three weeks has cost the company \$5 billion in capitalization, following a report of a bigger-than-expected loss in the second quarter and the disappointing performance for its second yieldco, the St. Louis Post-Dispatch reports.

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Only LED bulbs to be sold by IKEA

As part of its sustainability drive, IKEA plans to sell only LED light bulbs starting Sept. 1., The New York Times reports.

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Upcoming Events

- Aug. 11, Billings: The Bureau of Land Management to hold a listening session on potential reforms to the federal coal leasing program. 3:00 pm , 5001 Southgate Drive, Billings, Montana.
- Aug. 11, Washington: Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Gina McCarthy to speak on the final Clean Power Plan at an event hosted by Resources for the Future. 12:15 pm , 1616 P St. NW, Washington, DC.
- Aug. 11, Washington: The Environmental Protection Agency to hold public hearing on its proposed endangerment hearing for airline carbon emissions. Call In: 1-866-299-3188, Passcode: 1433527160. 10:00 am , Environmental Protection Agency.



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